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UNIC New York Havana.

CUBA.

At a small private meeting of permanent representatives held in the office of the Acting Secretary-General immediately following this afternoon's Council, Mr. Finletter said that he had been instructed to ask for a special meeting of the Council to be held at 10 o'clock tonight. He was not at liberty to discuss the subject matter and gave no indication that the spokesman would be anyone other than himself.

2. Tonight's meeting was in fact attended both by Mr. Dean Acheson and Mr. Sherman Kent of the U.I.A. as well as by Mr. Finletter. After explaining that he was appearing before the Council as an emissary of President Kennedy, Mr. Acheson said that the United States had very recently learnt that the weapons made available to Cuba by the Soviet Union, which had originally been believed to be solely defensive in character, had in fact a serious offensive capability. They included missiles with ranges of eleven hundred and two thousand two hundred miles. The latter could cover the whole of the United States except the extreme North West, as well as much of Canada and a great part of Central and South America.

3. Mr. Acheson then proceeded to give the Council a detailed account of the numbers, locations and types of weapons which were now known to be stationed in Cuba. These included mobile missile launchers, fixed missile sites, twenty two B 28 bombers, forty Mig 21 fighters, as well as coastal defence missiles, air defence missiles and guided missile control craft. A search of the major Cuban air fields had revealed no structures for

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UKDISL N.A.T.O. telegram No. 163 to Foreign Office.

-2-

nuclear storage but it must be assumed that nuclear weapons were now in Cuba for use in conjunction with the newly acquired weapons systems. The new offensive weapons were believed to have been carried to Cuba by the Soviet ship Poltava which had made frequent trips between the Soviet Union and Cuba and which was next due to arrive in Cuba on or about November 2. It was believed that all the new weapons would be operational by January 1. Many of them were operational already.

4. Mr. Acheson said that the first definite evidence of the existence of offensive weapons in Cuba had become available on October 15. Since then, there had been much discussion within the United States Administration and some strong opinions had been expressed. The President had now made his decision and would be announcing it in a speech very shortly.

5. Mr. Acheson then gave an outline of the President's speech. As from twenty-four hours after the speech, all ships sailing to Cuba were to be stopped and searched and ships carrying offensive weapons would be turned back. A close surveillance over Cuba was to be maintained. The United States armed forces had been ordered to prepare for all eventualities. Any missile attack on any part of the Western hemisphere would be regarded as a Soviet attack on the United States.

6. After describing the content of the President's speech, Mr. Acheson said that although other courses had been urged on the President, the latter had been anxious to avoid any action which might have brought drastic Soviet retaliation on America's Allies. In regard to the possible Soviet reaction to what was now intended, the United States Government believed that the Soviets would be tempted to try to oblige the United States to go a long way in the use of force. Soviet vessels might be ordered to take the risk of getting sunk in order to make the Americans appear as the aggressors. If that were to be the Soviet tactic, the United States were prepared to go a long way down the same road. The surveillance of Cuba which the President had ordered could result in the use of some of the defensive or offensive weapons now stationed in Cuba. If these weapons were used, they would be taken out. There were obviously grave possibilities of escalation in the situation and of Soviet retaliation in other parts of the world. In the political and propaganda field, a vigorous Soviet response was to be expected. The United States

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would be alerting governments in Latin America and offering them help in dealing with possible riots. There might be a strong Soviet drive for the abolition of all foreign military bases. In short, Khrushchev might say that he would leave Cuba if the United States would abandon its bases elsewhere.

7. Mr. Acheson described the action which the United States proposed to take in the Security Council, i.e. to call (in a resolution to be introduced on the night of October 23) for the withdrawal of offensive bases from Cuba, as essentially pre-emptive. The United States knew that if they did not take the matter to the Security Council themselves, someone else would.

8. In the ensuing discussion, which consisted largely of questions put to Mr. Acheson and Mr. Kent, a number of permanent representatives expressed sympathy with the United States position, although all avoided committing their governments. In answer to one question, Mr. Acheson said that the action taken by the Soviet Union in Cuba was an important step towards readjusting the nuclear balance between the Soviet Union and the United States and therefore constituted a threat to N.A.T.O. as a whole. It was of the highest importance that the Alliance should not break step at this time. Some retaliatory action against Berlin seemed inevitable. There were all sorts of plans to deal with the Berlin situation but everyone avoided commitment. This was a situation which must be remedied.

9. Both the Dutch and the Belgian representatives pressed Mr. Acheson to explain exactly what the United States expected her Allies to do. Mr. Acheson gave no explicit reply but Mr. Finletter intervened to say that solidarity was of supreme importance and that a major step forward would be the approval of the Bercon/Marcon plans.

10. In answer to a further question, Mr. Acheson said that President Kennedy's conversation with Mr. Gromyko had been disturbing in that the latter had told explicit falsehoods about the existence of offensive weapons in Cuba.

11. At one point during the meeting, the Belgian permanent representative complained strongly that an announcement had been issued by SHAPB to the effect that the N.A.T.O. air forces had been put in a state of alert. This had been done without any consultation with the Alliance. General Moore, SACEUR's Chief of Staff, was then invited to join the meeting and explained that

SECRET

UKDEL N.A.T.O. telegram No. 163 to Foreign Office.

-1-

that had been done amounted neither to a state of simple alert nor to a state of vigilance. General Norstad had recommended to his subordinate commanders that they should take appropriate precautionary military measures such as the intensification of the collection of military intelligence and a review of all alert and emergency plans. They had been asked to do this in an unprovocative manner and in as far as possible without exciting public notice.

12. The Acting Secretary-General ended the meeting by reminding the Council of the special arrangements to ensure its efficient functioning in a period of rising tension. It was clear that we were now entering such a period.

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[Repeated as requested]

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